

Remarks

Reconsideration of the above-captioned application is respectfully requested. All previously pending claims (1-10 and 22-26) have been rejected as being anticipated by Brammer et al. or as being unpatentable over Brammer et al. The objection to the Abstract has been cured hereby.

Of relevance to the present prosecution is the allegation that Brammer et al. teaches a threadless means for compressing the disk spring against the load washer, relying on the seismic mass 8. Presumably, the examiner is availing himself of the opportunity to construe claims as broadly as he can, because Brammer et al. specifically teaches that what holds the spring in compression is not the seismic mass 8 in isolation but rather the seismic mass 8 in combination with the ring 9 (col. 2, lines 32-35) which is "screwed on or fastened" to an element not mentioned by Brammer et al.

Accordingly, as an initial matter, given the explicit teachings of Brammer et al. that the combination of elements 8 and 9 (with element 9 being screwed on or otherwise fastened, presumably by conventional threaded fasteners because Brammer et al. nowhere suggests otherwise) hold the spring in compression, it is a stretch to pretend that only the element 8 does the job. Nonetheless, in the spirit of moving prosecution along, Claim 1 now sets forth compression structure not taught or suggested by Brammer et al., namely, a flared end formed by the sleeve.

It is noted that this limitation was formerly recited in Claim 2 and rejected on the basis that while Figure 4 of Brammer et al. indeed shows the claimed-around threads, Figure 1 "shows a flare as claimed".

Manifestly, this is incorrect. Note that Claim 1 does not merely recite a "flare" in a vacuum. Rather, it recites that the sleeve forms the flare. But the element in Brammer et al. that has been relied on as the claimed sleeve is the pressure sleeve 2, which shows no flare that contacts the relied-upon spring 5 and 7, as clearly shown by the cross-hatching in Brammer et al.'s figures. To the extent that anything contacts the relied-upon springs 5 and 7 it is portions of the housing 1 (which cannot function as the claimed sleeve "around" which other elements are disposed), the insulating disk 4, and the ceramic disk 6, none of which in any case function to hold the spring in

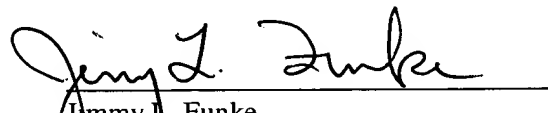
compression since Brammer et al. explicitly teaches that this function is accomplished, as discussed above, by the cooperation of structure between the mass 8 and ring 9. Accordingly, Claim 2 is patentable.

With respect to Claim 3, which in its dependent form had been rejected based on the allegation that the ring 9 of Brammer et al. is press fitted around the sleeve, nowhere does Brammer et al. mention "press fitting", much less the press fitting of the ring 9. Instead, as noted above Brammer et al. teaches that the ring 9 is threaded or other fastened. No evidence has been adduced of record that the skilled artisan would equate "fastening" an element with "press fitting" the element. Indeed, the more general term for a press fit is an interference fit. Ordinarily, one does not refer to an element that is intended to be press fit as being "fastened"; rather, one refers to it as being "engaged in an interference fit". Consequently, even under the guise of broad claim interpretation, regarding the relied-upon teachings of Brammer et al. as a suggestion to press fit the ring 9 is overreaching, see MPEP §2111.01 (claim terms can be given not any broad interpretation during prosecution but only the broadest reasonable meaning that one skilled in the art would give them). Accordingly, Claim 3 is patentable.

For the reasons advanced above, the remaining independent claims are patentable. The Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned for any reason which would advance the instant application to allowance.

You are hereby authorized to charge any fees due for filing this Amendment to Delphi Technologies, Inc. Deposit Account No. 50-0831.

Respectfully submitted,



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